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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLN. OF: BERNAT et al.

SERIAL NO: 10/067,656

FILED: February 4, 2002

FOR: A PLUG CONNECTOR CONSISTING OF PLUG-IN.

DOCKET: PRINZ H1740

Assistant Commissioner of Patents & Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

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TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Dear Sir:

In connection with the above-entitled matter, Applicant wishes to bring to the attention of the Patent Office prior art received in connection with a Novelty Search of Applicant's corresponding European and German applications. Attached are copies of the European and German Search Reports, and the references cited therein. The claims in the present application are believed to be patentably distinguished over these references.

This Information Disclosure Statement is being made pursuant to the duty of disclosure imposed by law and formulated in 37 CFR 1.56(A). No representation is made that the information thus disclosed in fact constitute prior art or that it is the closest prior art, inasmuch as 37 CFR 1.56(A) relies on a materiality concept which depends on subjectivity.

In compliance with the requirements of 37 C.F.R. § 1.98(a)(3), as a concise statement of relevance, as it is presently understood by the individual designed in 35 U.S.C. § 1.56(c) most knowledgeable about the content of the information, the undersigned attorney of record submits a copy of the European and German Search Reports by foreign examiners in which the references

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were cited. The relevance to the pending U.S. patent application is that the references were cited in foreign patent applications on the same subject matter.

The CH 323 737 reference cited in the European Search Report discloses a contact device for use in high-voltage environments. The device makes contact between two elements 3 and 8 (see Fig. 1) by means of eight contact fingers 6 which are biased through one spring 7 each. The arrangement is contained in a cage 5. The contact pressure stays uniform even when the middle axes of elements 3 and 8 are not coincident.

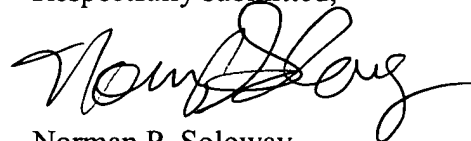
The DE 1 115 326 B reference cited as background art in the German Search Report discloses a male or female plug element. The element is comprised of a cable side (upper halves in Figures), a plug- or socket side (lower halves in Figures) and an elastic section therebetween. This elastic section consists of a meander-like component 1/2/4 and, optionally, a spring 5.

The DD 100 361 C reference shows a plug connection with two plug parts being movable relative to each other, for delivering power to an electric device. A plug 3 is mounted on a base plate 6 which is rotatably mounted on a stationary frame 5. Provided on the base plate 6 is a guiding fork 1 cooperating with a pivotally mounted contact piece 2 movable in lengthwise direction.

U.S. Patent 5,906,520, FR 2 797 102, EP 0 340 952 and DE 37 09 903 C are cited as background art only; no independent analysis of these references or the accuracy of the statement of foreign examiners or the claims of the foreign applications under the laws of the country or the United States relative to the subject matter claimed in the present application has been made; the present understanding of the contents thereof by the undersigned being based on the foreign examiners' comments submitted therewith.

The enclosed Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted prior to the first action on the merits. Therefore, we believe there are no fees involved with this information disclosure statement. However, in the event there are any fees payable, please charge them to our Deposit Account No. 08-1391.

Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Assistant Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks, Washington, D.C. 20231 on May 1, 2002 at Tucson, Arizona.

By: Diana Carr

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